

Maryland Environmental Trust
Board of Trustees Meeting
May 4, 2026

This meeting was held in person at 100 Community Place, Third Floor, Room 3.218 (MHT conference room) Crownsville, MD 21032, and virtually via google Meets at: meet.google.com/ekh-akff-qyh, and by telephone conference call at: 1 424 257 5377 PIN:148 438 750#

Trustees Present:

Gary Burnett, Chair
Lori Lynch, Vice Chair
Thomas (Toby) Lloyd, Secretary
Mark Hoffman, Treasurer
Keith Colston
Julia King
Diana Conway
Megan Benjamin
Crystal Chissell
Megan D'Arcy
Nathan Volke
Alice Chalmers
Craig Highfield
Hillary Bell (representing the Governor of Maryland who is an ex-officio trustee)
Delegate Natalie Ziegler (representing the Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates who is an ex-officio trustee)

Trustees Absent:

Craig Highfield

Others Present:

John Turgeon, Director, Maryland Environmental Trust (MET Staff)
Josette Markline (MET Staff)
Kelly Price (MET Staff)
Matt Ludington (MET Staff)
Michelle Grafton (MET Staff)
Dan Skalos (MET Staff)
Kevin Bull (MET Staff)
Cynthia McCann, Assistant Attorney General (Office of Attorney General)
Talley Kovacs, Assistant Attorney General (Office of Attorney General)
Karl Kappler, University student observing the board meeting for school

I . Call to Order

Chair Burnett called the regular meeting of the MET Board of Trustees to order at 4:07pm.

II . Minutes of the February 2, 2026 Regular Meeting

Chair Burnett asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees held on February 2, 2026. Mr. Lloyd motioned to approve the minutes; Ms. Benjamin seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

III. Board Chair Report

Chair Burnett mentioned that an ad hoc committee will be created to promote the 60th anniversary of MET in 2027. Chair Burnett motioned to approve the new committee. Delegate Ziegler seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

An open discussion was held regarding the committee and the tasks involved. Mr. Turgeon asked if there were any other members that would like to serve on the new committee.

The following Board members volunteered to serve on the ad hoc committee:

Chair Burnett
Ms. D'Arcy
Mr. Colston
Ms. Benjamin
Lori Lynch

The following MET staff members volunteered to serve on the ad hoc committee:

Mr. Turgeon
Ms. Grafton

Chair Burnett motioned to add the members to the ad hoc committee. Ms. Benjamin seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Colston asked if the ad hoc committee would only be for those who serve on the board or if non-board members could serve. Ms. Kovacs responded that members would probably need to be members of the advisory council.

Chair Burnett spoke highly of Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Hoffman for the work they have accomplished and for their time serving on the MET Board of Trustees. He mentioned that there will be a gathering at Lure's Bar & Grill after this meeting to celebrate their service on the board. *Round of applause* Chair Burnett also noted that this meeting would be his last as board Chair, but he will continue to serve on the board for another 2 years. He thanked everyone for their support over his time as Chair.

IV. Director's Report

Mr. Turgeon provided an update on the Irvine Nature Center easement stewardship matter in Baltimore County. He reminded the Board that they approved giving him the ability to negotiate with Irvine with the assistance of the OAG to resolve the matter. At the last Board meeting he reported that we were close to agreeing with Irvine on the terms for a temporary commercial uses letter agreement. However, since that meeting other issues have arisen, requiring more time to negotiate towards an acceptable agreement. MET continues to work with Irvine Nature Center and co-holder Caves Valley Land Trust to reach a consensus on a temporary commercial use agreement for this property.

Mr. Turgeon reported on the status of the amended and restated deed of easement for the Chase Farm property in Howard County. MET and OAG have been working with representatives from the Chase Farm properties. An amended and restated easement was a requirement of the settlement agreement, which was done in 2025. The parties are close to finalizing the amended easement, but the three landowners have delayed executing the amendment pending resolution of other outstanding items from their settlement agreement. Once the amended and restated deed is finalized it will be brought back before the board for approval.

Mr. Turgeon gave an update on the Keep MD Beautiful (KMB) grants, which were awarded in March following approval by the MET Board at its February 2nd meeting. \$205,000 dollars were awarded for tree planting projects, land trust assistance, which primarily went to nonprofits as well as land trusts. There were 62 applications received, requesting nearly \$460,000 in grants, so a number of projects were turned down. Mr. Turgeon thanked the KMB funders MDOT, Dept of Agriculture, and the MET board which provided an additional \$10,000 to the grant fund in 2026.

The MET annual appeal (end of 2025) for donations to MET's Board-managed endowment received about \$2,000 from MET easement landowners. The appeal was also sent to Board membership resulting in about \$3,000 donated from MET trustees. Mr. Turgeon thanked the board members for their donations.

Mr. Turgeon updated the board on legislation regarding the State's Hart-Miller Island Citizen Oversight Committee, which requires that two MET trustees serve on it. Ms. Benjamin and Ms. Lynch currently serve on the oversight committee. Ahead of this year's legislative session Mr. Turgeon worked with Lydia McPherson at DNR on proposing departmental legislation to remove the requirement that MET trustees serve on the committee. DNR decided not to submit the requested bill during this session. If the BOT is interested in pursuing the change MET can raise it to the DNR's legislative staff for the next legislative session.

V. Committee Reports

A. Lands Committee

Ms. Benjamin advised the Board members that the Lands Committee met on April 22, 2026, and they had one item being brought to the Board in the consent agenda for approval. All information pertaining to this item is in the Board packet that was emailed to everyone.

Consent agenda - Lands Committee recommendations to approve new conservation easements to MET.

- a. Proposed new easement donation to MET from Samuel Zigler and Sharon Kalbarczyk – 6245 Harley Road, Frederick County, 30 acres

Ms. Benjamin asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as stated above. Mr. Lloyd moved to approve it; Chair Burnett seconded. All voted in favor.

Ms. Benjamin turned the meeting over to Mr. Skalos for an update on the Easement Program.

Mr. Skalos advised the Board that there are four projects left for the fiscal year that they are trying to close, totaling approximately 300 acres. Thus far, they have completed eight conservation easements totaling approximately 600 acres.

MET is involved with the planning of numerous outreach events. The first will be held in Frederick County at Antietam Creek Vineyards in July. This event is hosted by the Heart of Maryland Conservation Alliance who plans to invite 200 private landowners who own properties that are not conserved. The Southern Maryland Conservation Alliance, mainly headed by American Chestnut Land Conservancy, is also planning up to 7 outreach events. The dates and locations of these events are still to be determined, and recent conversation has indicated they may scale the number of meetings back to 5. Lower Shore Land Trust has also indicated interest in an outreach event done in conjunction with MET. This would be held in Worcester County early in 2027.

Mr. Skalos mentioned that the pipeline is strong for the next fiscal year and the future MFR goals.

Ms. Markline reported no major updates with the Stewardship team. She said staff have been monitoring on the ground throughout the spring and have been fielding numerous questions from interested buyers of easement properties that have been listed for sale. Staff have also been receiving numerous questions from existing landowners related to spring projects on their properties, with many resulting in the need for formal approvals.

B. Land Trust Outreach

Ms. Grafton reported that the next LTOC meeting will be on May 14, 2026. She thanked Mr. Lloyd for serving as chair as he will be stepping off. She is currently working with land trust to complete Cooperative Agreement renewals. She has completed 9 renewals in FY2026, which is double the usual annual number. An additional 8 renewals may be completed before the end of

the year. Almost 400 co-held monitoring reports have been received, processed and reviewed from calendar year 2025 with more yet to come.

The next MET Roundtable will be held on Wednesday May 6, 2026, to discuss simplifying processes and strengthening policies. There are 28 people registered. It will take place in the conference room on the first floor of the Crownsville building. The Easement Program will focus on its plan to streamline MET's database to create a smoother and user-friendly experience. It will also cover MET's improvements to its easement acquisition processes and potential model-deed easement changes. Stewardship will discuss monitoring and stewardship priorities and review enforcement procedures.

Ms. Grafton noted that she has been working with DNR's Office of Communications to implement ADA Title II compliance requirements. Staff will continue to be trained on making our digital documents and public documents accessible. It is an ongoing process and DNR is providing updates to MET as they become available.

C. Governance

Mr. Lloyd thanked Chair Burnett for his leadership and his time as the MET Board Chair.

Mr. Lloyd noted that there were 2 different sets of votes, re-election of a Board member and Executive Committee election votes.

The following votes were taken:

The committee recommended re-election of Diana Conway for a second term of four years as a MET Trustee.

Chair Burnett motioned to approve. Mr. Colston seconded the motion. All in favor.

Mr. Lloyd stated that Roberts Rules do not require a member to step away during election votes, so all members could remain during voting.

Megan Benjamin was nominated to serve a two-year term as MET Board Chair starting on June 1, 2026.

Chair Burnett motioned to approve. Mr. Hoffman seconded the motion. All in favor.

Lori Lynch was nominated for re-election of for two years as the Board Vice Chair.

Delegate Zielger motioned to approve. Ms. Benjamin seconded the motion. All in favor.

Ms. Julia King was nominated for a one-year term as Board Treasurer due to her term cycle ending next year. After next year Ms. King will be eligible to be reelected for a full term.

Mr. Colston motioned to approve. Delegate Ziegler seconded the motion. All in favor.

Mr. Colston was nominated for a two-year term as the Board Secretary. Chair Burnett motioned to approve. Mr. Hoffman seconded. All in favor.

Mr. Lloyd gave the MET Board an update on the effort to fill four vacancies on the Board and one ex-officio role.

An open discussion was held regarding the vacancies and ways to get the legislative offices to help with submitting nominations. In the next year the list of names will need to be rebuilt with more names of people who would make good board members. A request was made to contact the governance committee with any nominations. Mr. Turgeon and Mr. Lloyd plan to visit the Senate President's office to get confirmation of nominee names.

Mr. Lloyd mentioned that the ethical financial disclosures were due for completion on April 30, 2026. He stated that if anyone has not submitted their information yet to please visit the website and complete the forms.

Mr. Lloyd concluded his report and thanked the board, stating that he thoroughly enjoyed his time serving, and added a special thank you to the MET staff for being inspiring.

D. Finance

Mr. Hoffman thanked Mr. Lloyd for being a model Board member and thanked Ms. Chissel for joining the committee. He asked if anyone would be interested in filing his role on the committee in order to assist Ms. King, who would be serving as finance committee chair in the next year.

Mr. Hoffman referred to the two documents distributed prior to the meeting:

1. MET Balance Sheet as of March 31, 2026
2. Budget vs. Actuals: FY26 July 2025 - March 2026

Mr. Hoffman advised the Board that Ms. King has been nominated by the finance committee to take the position as Chair and her new role will start as of June 1, 2026.

Mr. Hoffman asked for a motion to approve the financial statements ending March 31, 2026, as distributed in the Board Packet prior to the meeting. Mr. Lloyd motioned to approve; Chair Burnett seconded. All voted in favor.

Mr. Hoffman mentioned that MET was gifted funds in a will that need to be utilized. The account is named the Vansant account, from the will left to MET from Barbara Vansant, who is not the owner of the easement. The funds must be dedicated to stewardship of one particular easement, so it is preferred that the funds be spent to fulfill this requirement as soon as possible. Mr. Hoffman said that MET staff will be communicating with necessary people to help move this project forward.

Mr. Hoffman stated that the FY27 private side budget draft has been presented to the Finance Committee and will be shared at the next Board meeting for approval.

Mr. Hoffman thanked everyone on the Board for all their hard work and dedication. He wishes success to all.

E. Ad-hoc Committee Re: Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project

Chair Burnett stated that there is nothing to report as the project has been mired in legal matters and access matters, but the committee will continue to monitor the situation.

VI. Other Business

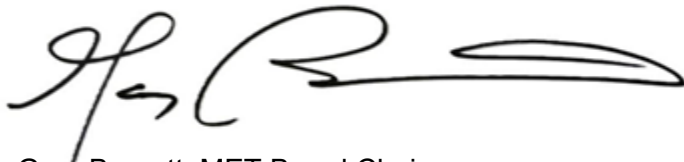
No other business was brought before the Board.

VII. Adjourned

Chair Burnett requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Colston moved to adjourn; Mr. Hoffman seconded. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 4:47pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Burnett', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gary Burnett, MET Board Chair

These minutes from the Open session of the regular MET Board meeting on May 4, 2026, were approved by the Board of Trustees on June 1, 2026.

Please note that for most attachments listed and that are considered regular meeting handouts (like Stateside Budget Finance, MET Administered (non-State) Funds Budget/Finance and Director's Reports), a copy is stored with handouts and MET Board Packets for the meeting at which that information was distributed to the Board. In that case, a duplicate copy will not be attached here.